

Chapter 8: Measuring the Outcome of Public Service Activities

This chapter provides an overview to how Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)-funded public services are reported in the CPD Performance Measurement System. The chapter describes typical public services eligible under CDBG and describes how grantees report on these public service activities in IDIS to provide information for the CPD Performance Measurement System.

Types of Public Service Activities Funded with CDBG

CDBG funds can be used to provide a wide variety of public services including, but not limited to:

- ☐ Employment services (e.g., job training);
- ☐ Crime prevention;
- ☐ Child care;
- ☐ Health services;
- ☐ Drug abuse services (e.g., counseling and treatment);
- ☐ Fair housing counseling;
- ☐ Energy conservation; and
- ☐ Homebuyer downpayment assistance.

HUD CPD Objectives and Outcomes

When setting up a public service activity in IDIS, the grantee must determine which of the three objectives – Suitable Living Environment, Decent Housing, or Creating Economic Opportunities – best describes the purpose of the public service activity. For example:

- ☐ **Suitable Living Environment:** Public service activities that benefit communities and individuals by addressing issues that impact their living environment, such as establishing an after school program for high school kids to prevent/reduce crime in a target neighborhood.
- ☐ **Decent Housing:** Housing counseling activities that assist low- and moderate-income individuals or households resolve tenant/landlord disputes.

- ☐ **Creating Economic Opportunities:** Activities that expand economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons, such as offering job training and placement for persons with disabilities.

Remember, these objectives will be presented as options on the applicable IDIS screens. Activities can fall in more than one of the objective categories above. For example, the after school program that creates a suitable living environment could also create economic opportunities if the program is designed to provide enrichment education and additional training to program participants. Grantees should select the objective that most closely reflects **why** they are funding the activity.

Once the objective is selected, the grantee will choose one of three outcome categories that best describes what the grantee seeks to achieve by funding the public service activity. Again, these options will be menu-driven in IDIS – Availability/Accessibility, Affordability, and Sustainability.

- ☐ **Availability/Accessibility** activities make services, infrastructure, public services, public facilities, housing, or shelter available or accessible to low- and moderate-income people. For instance, opening a day care center for students in a neighborhood high school so that educational opportunities remain available and accessible to young mothers.
- ☐ **Affordability** activities provide affordability to low- and moderate-income persons. For instance, providing free housing counseling to low- and moderate-income families to enable them to obtain such assistance without charge.
- ☐ **Sustainability** activities are aimed at improving communities, to make them more livable or viable. For instance, establishing programs in a local community center to provide neighborhood children with structured activities after school.

The grantee must select **one** of the three outcomes for each public service activity. While it may be the case that a grantee feels that two or even all three outcomes are equally important to its activity, it must select only one for the purpose of IDIS data entry. However, a grantee may indicate more than one proposed outcome for an activity in the narratives for its Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan and its reporting.

Based on the locally-defined objective and outcome(s) selected (and in the case of CDBG activities, the national objective selected), IDIS will identify the specific indicators the grantee must report on for each public service activity. Only the appropriate indicators for the public service activity undertaken will be made available by IDIS. The objective and outcome(s) will combine with the activity indicator data to produce statements regarding the results of the public service activity that can be nationally aggregated.

Exhibit 8-1 provides suggestions about which objectives and outcomes might be selected for typical CDBG public service activities. As noted earlier, some activities can fall into more than one category. The grantee will need to base its selection of the appropriate objective and outcome on the purpose of the activity when it is funded.

Exhibit 8-1

Suggestions for Choosing an Objective and Outcome: Public Services

Outcome →	Availability/Accessibility	Affordability	Sustainability
Objective ↓			
Suitable Living Environment	<p>Public service activities funded to provide access to a suitable living environment.</p> <p><i>Example: An after-school program designed to address crime or juvenile delinquency in target neighborhoods</i></p>	<p>Public service activities funded to support housing opportunities in a target neighborhood.</p> <p><i>Example: A housing counseling program</i></p>	<p>Public service activity aimed at improving communities or neighborhoods.</p> <p><i>Example: Community policing program</i></p>
Decent Housing	<p>Public service activities funded to increase accessibility to housing.</p> <p><i>Example: Fair housing counseling program</i></p>	<p>Public service activities funded to make housing affordable.</p> <p><i>Example: Energy conservation training or education program focused on reducing energy costs for low- and moderate-income people</i></p>	<p>Public service activities funded to sustain housing in neighborhoods.</p> <p><i>Example: Housing counseling program for existing low- and moderate-income homeowners to help them avoid predatory lending</i></p>
Economic Opportunity	<p>Public service activities funded to provide access to economic opportunities.</p> <p><i>Example: Operating costs for a jobs transportation program, job training program, literacy program</i></p>	<p>Public service activities funded to support economic opportunities.</p> <p><i>Example: Free job training program for low- and moderate-income people</i></p>	<p>Public service activities funded to sustain economic opportunities.</p> <p><i>Example: Child care programs or day care centers, health services</i></p>

The next section describes the specific indicators for public service activities, the data required from grantees, and key issues grantees may face in data collection.

Reporting on Public Service Activities

The specific outcome indicators for public service activities require only minimal data collection or reporting on the part of grantees beyond that which is currently required.

Data Required

For each public service activity, the grantee will be required to report on the following information, regardless of what national objective the activity supports:

- ☐ *Number of persons assisted with **new access** to a service.*
 - New access to a service is when a service is offered for the first time. This indicator would be used in the instance when a public service has not previously been available to these households. For instance, the grantee might elect to fund a new job transportation program for working mothers. No such program currently exists in the jurisdiction and so this is access to a new service for these households.
- ☐ *Number of persons assisted with **improved access** to a service.*
 - Improved access to a service is when a service was offered, but the public service activity allowed the grantee to expand the service, in terms of size, capacity, or location. For instance, assume that an existing meals on wheels program only provided lunch and the expanded service provides lunch and dinner service. For these elderly households, this would constitute improved access. If a grantee is re-funding an on-going program, the improved access indicator is generally used.
- ☐ *Where the public service activity was used to meet a quality standard or measurably improved quality, report on the number of persons that **no longer** only have access to a **substandard service**.*
- ☐ *The number of beds created in overnight shelter or other emergency housing.*

Note: If a grantee funded a new public service activity in the past and now continues to fund that activity that would be initially reported as new access and would continue to be reported as new access in subsequent funding years. For example, assume that in FY06 a grantee funds a new job training program. If the grantee funds that program again in FY07 and in FY08, it would continue to be reported under “new access”.

This approach would also be true if a service initially qualified as improved access or enhanced quality and it was funded again in subsequent years. For example, assume that in FY06 a grantee funded a nonprofit to expand its existing housing counseling program. If that program is re-funded in FY07, it would continue to be improved access.

Note that these indicators apply even if the grantee under CDBG has chosen the limited clientele national objective and the activity will be serving one of the presumed clientele listed in the program regulations. Under that method of documenting the limited clientele national objective, all served persons under that specific, targeted activity are presumed to be low- and moderate-income. So, the grantee is not required to document that 51 percent of the participants are LMI but rather that the activity does indeed serve the limited clientele. However, for both national objective compliance and for the IDIS performance measurement data, grantees must still count the total number of

beneficiaries. In the case of the performance measures, this will include the common indicators on leverage and numbers of persons served and the public services indicator related to persons with new, improved, or enhanced quality of services.

Also note that if a grantee under CDBG is funding a downpayment assistance program as a public service that activity will typically be qualified under the LMI Housing National Objective and so it will trigger the indicators related to homebuyer assistance, not just the indicators related to new or improved access to a service. See chapter 4 for more information on the housing-related indicators.

Counting Beneficiaries in Co-Funded Public Service Programs

Many public service activities are supported by multiple funding sources in addition to CDBG. For purposes of the performance indicators, the grantee should *count all households served by the program not just a proportionate share*. The only instance when the grantee would count the proportionate share is the unusual circumstance when the CDBG funding can be separated from the other funding – such as paying directly for a scholarship for a particular household not for a portion of the overall operations of a public service program.

Key Issues in Data Collection

Although many grantees have data collection and reporting systems in place to capture the required data, the commencement of the CPD Performance Measurement System creates an opportunity to review how well data collection is occurring.

- ❑ The data required for reporting on public services is generated when the service is delivered. Further, the data is generated when and where the service is provided. This means that grantees must rely on subrecipients and service providers to report the required data to the grantee.
- ❑ Grantees should review and define the data elements required in the CPD Performance Measurement System and verify that current data collected is consistent with HUD's new requirements.
 - If necessary, grantees should conduct outreach to make sure their current subrecipients and service provider partners understand the new reporting requirements.
 - Providing specific guidance to partners helps ensure that the data collected is accurate and that the wide variety of staff involved in collecting data do so consistently.
- ❑ Grantees (and subrecipients) may need to revise program documents and forms to ensure that the required data elements are included.
 - Any and all documents and materials that discuss program requirements, capture information about applicants and proposed activities, and/or educate

the public and prospective applicants about the program or assistance available should be reviewed and revised as needed.

- Reporting and/or data collection forms used by subrecipients or service providers should be revised to capture the new data elements.
- ❑ Communicate with subrecipients that these requirements are mandatory, and their performance will be assessed, in part, on how well they meet these requirements. Note that agreements with subrecipients and other partners should be revised to reflect the new reporting requirements.

Timing and Level of Program Data Entry

At a minimum, grantees must report on public service beneficiaries annually, even when the activity is not yet completed. In order to avoid the challenge of year-end data collection, however, grantees are encouraged to require subrecipients and service providers to report more frequently, such as monthly or quarterly, and then to enter data on a regular basis throughout the year.

Applicable IDIS Screens

Public Services/Public Facilities and Improvements screen: This screen captures the required data for the public service indicators (see above for more information on the specific public service indicators).

05/03/06 13:42		Public Services/Public Facilities and Improvements		CDBG17
Grantee Activity ID		IDIS Activity ID		538
Activity Name		BOYS & GIRLS CLUB		Natl/Obj LMC
Year to Insert: ____ : 0				
Of the persons assisted, enter the number that:				
Now have new access (continuing) to this service or benefit:				_____
Now have improved access to this service or benefit:				_____
Now receive a service or benefit that is no longer substandard:				_____
Total:				0
Now have new access (continuing) to this type of public facility or infrastructure improvement:				_____
Now have improved access to this type of public facility or infrastructure improvement:				_____
That are served by public facility or infrastructure that is no longer substandard:				_____
Total:				0
# of beds created in overnight shelter or other emergency housing:				_____
Insert/Delete program year (I/D)? _				
Type year to be inserted and press <ENTER> to confirm.				
F4=MAIN MENU F5=PROJ INFO F7=PREV F8=NEXT				